

LEARNING TO TEACH EACH INDIVIDUAL CHILD

Louisiana students are just as smart and capable as any in America. As adults, they will compete with peers from around the country for jobs and for opportunity. Recognizing this, Louisiana has embraced the challenge of preparing its students to read, write, and perform math tasks on a par with students nationwide.

When Louisiana shifted to higher standards in the past – as in when the state instituted the LEAP test in the 1990s – the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) instituted an approach of standardization. The state created dozens of grade-level expectations teachers were expected to teach. The state approved textbooks teachers were told to cover. The state produced a Comprehensive Curriculum, prescribing lesson plans. State-led professional development was often conducted in large group settings, through a lecture format.

Performance evaluations were also standardized, with nearly 99 percent of educators assessed as ‘satisfactory.’ A statewide salary schedule determined lockstep, standard pay. Every teacher received the tenure label at the same point in their careers, with little fanfare. Principals often hired whomever they were told to hire.

Teaching to nationally competitive expectations is a complex activity that cannot be standardized. It requires thoughtful preparation, so that each student’s individual needs can be considered in the lesson. It requires asking ambitious questions during the lesson that allow students to demonstrate their independent thought. It necessitates frequent participation in the lesson from each individual student. And it takes constant assessment of what each student has learned, from minute to minute and day to day.



There is no owner's manual for teaching in this individualized way. For some, it will come relatively easy. For others, it will take years. But as with all creative, independent tasks, it cannot be standardized. Instead, it takes tools, practice, and individual guidance.

Louisiana has ended standardized textbooks, curriculum, professional development, evaluation ratings, pay scales, tenure policies, hiring policies, and spending mandates. Our state believes that educators should be trusted to make decisions for themselves, on behalf of the students we serve. In place of the standardized approach, Louisiana educators practice their craft using tools, addressing the needs of each individual child to help each learn at a higher level.

The state's Classroom Support Toolbox provides tools with which to set goals for students, plan lessons plans and curriculum, and assess learning. Compass is a set of tools within the larger Toolbox, as well as a basic process for using these tools, all aimed at helping educators practice the difficult craft of addressing the needs of each individual child.

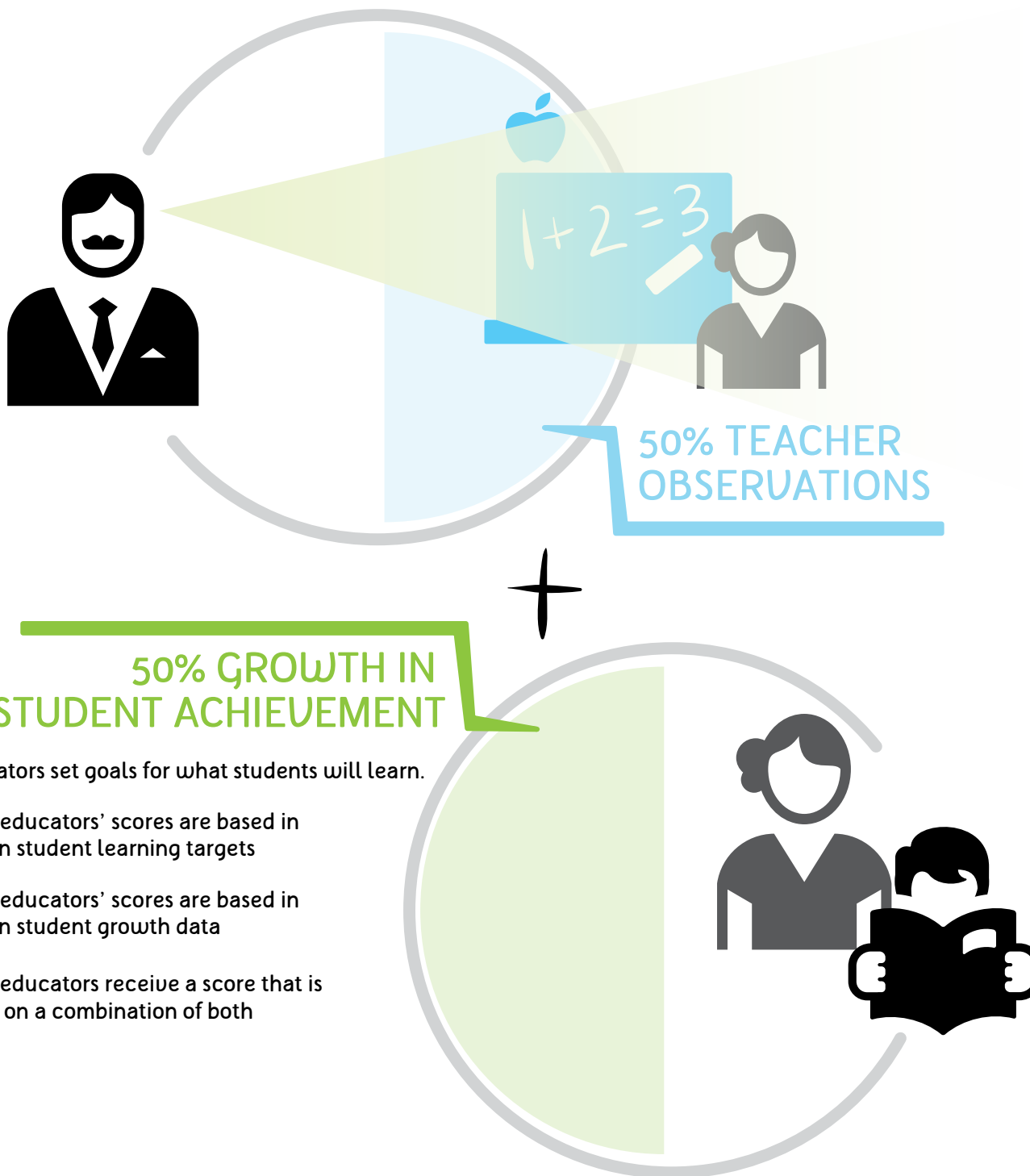
This report does not tell the story of all 50,000 educators and all they do to improve. It cannot capture the moment when a colleague provides a lesson planning insight that makes tomorrow better than today. It cannot describe the power of a school leader who sets an ambitious vision for student learning.



Instead its intent is to provide the public and educators a lens through which to understand our state's approach to educator improvement. It is a field of information that can serve as a tool in adjusting expectations, in making connections from school to school or district to district, and in considering future policy decisions.

The report is not meant to pass immediate judgment. Using this tool well will require patient review of where there are commonalities and where there are differences in how the Compass tool was used in its first year. In understanding these trends and contrasts, we can better understand how administrators and teachers can adjust their own processes or expectations in the years to come. As with all elements of the Compass tool, this report is not an end or a definitive judgment unto itself. It is a prompt to conversation and part of the learning process.

HOW IT WORKS.



COMPASS EVALUATION RESULTS

Professional Practice Score (50% of Final Rating)	Student Outcomes Score (50% of Final Rating)	Value-Added Data (Contributes to Student Outcome Score)	Student Learning Target Data (Contributes to Student Outcome Score)
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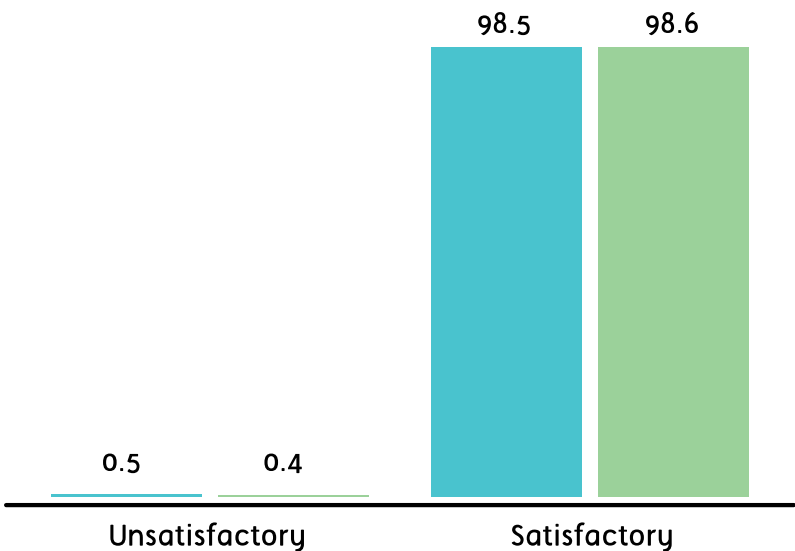
2012-2013 COMPASS RESULTS SUMMARY

IN COMPARISON TO PAST YEARS

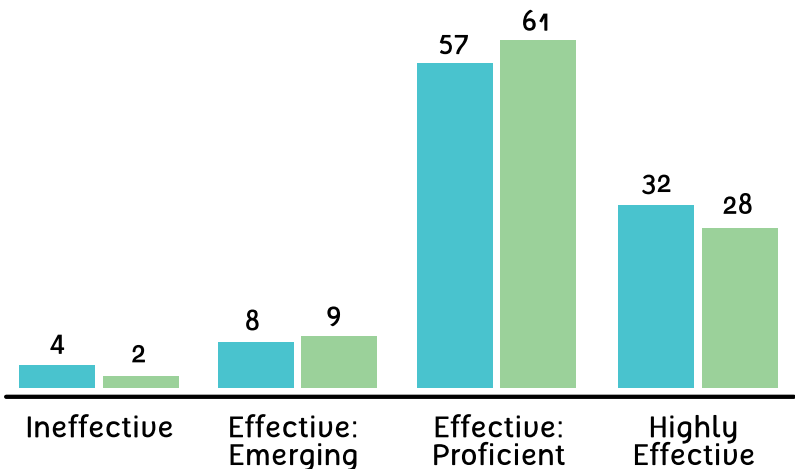
As a result of the Compass process, more Louisiana educators than ever before set goals and received feedback on their performance.

In terms of educator feedback, past evaluation systems yielded minimal, uniform data that were not reflective of educators' diverse skills and needs. In 2010-11, for example, more than 98 percent of educators received a "satisfactory" rating. This year, however, evaluators used the Compass process to provide educators with individualized information based on multiple measures of performance. As a result, educators' final ratings are more diverse than in past years, spanning four performance levels.

Educator Rating in 2010-2011:
Percentage of Educators



Compass Ratings in 2012-2013:
Percentage of Educators



ANALYSIS OF 2012-2013 OUTCOMES

The distribution of Compass ratings from one school district to the next is generally consistent with student progress trends in those districts.

Unlike in past years, aggregate evaluation results for teachers and leaders generally align with student progress results. Where students improved, teachers and leaders were more likely to receive favorable ratings. Where student progress did not occur as frequently, teachers and leaders were less likely to receive high ratings. For example:

- Of the ten parishes with the highest percentage of teachers rated in the top two levels, seven were in the state's top 25 percent in student progress or student achievement. All are in the top half of districts in terms of student achievement.
- On average, parishes in the top 50 percent in terms of student progress rated 10 percent of teachers in the bottom two categories. Parishes in the bottom 50 percent of student proficiency growth rated, on average, 17 percent of teachers in the bottom two categories.
- Of the ten parishes with the highest percentage of teachers rated in the bottom two categories, nine were in the bottom quartile in student progress or student achievement.
- Of the ten parishes with the highest percentage of teachers rated Ineffective, seven experienced an aggregate drop in student proficiency.

However, some districts that achieved high levels of growth in 2012-2013 used classroom observations to set a particularly high bar for teaching quality, giving educators increased feedback and room to improve. This was particularly evident in districts that made gains with low-income students, implying a link between the rigor of classroom observations and student progress in challenging settings.

- Evaluators in the Recovery School District (RSD) in New Orleans, where the district ranked in the 97th percentile in terms of student progress, set a high bar and were less likely to assign highly effective observation ratings: 9 percent in the RSD versus 27 percent statewide.



- St. Bernard Parish ranked in the 96th percentile in student growth and in the 88th percentile in terms of student proficiency. The parish also had the highest percentage of teachers with value-added scores in the top two levels (81 percent). Evaluators were less likely to assign Highly Effective observation ratings, though: 8 percent in St. Bernard Parish versus 27 percent statewide.
- East Feliciana Parish ranked in the 94th percentile in terms of student growth yet assigned substantially more rigorous observation scores. East Feliciana evaluators assigned 64 percent of teachers Proficient or Highly Effective observation ratings compared to 90 percent statewide.
- Ascension Parish student progress ranked in the state's top quartile, but because of a very high bar for classroom teaching, 6 percent of observations yielded a Highly Effective measure, compared to a statewide average of 27 percent.

The report shows some first-year challenges with the rigor of evaluators' ratings:

1. Evaluators' classroom observation scores and student learning target scores were not as rigorous in their distribution as were value-added scores. Value-added scores provide districts with a statistical measure of a teacher's impact on student learning. While value-added data is only one of several measures used to understand teacher performance, in the future educators can use the value-added results as a tool for providing intensive support and frequent support to teachers struggling to make progress.
2. Evaluator rigor varied from district to district in classroom observation and student learning target measures, implying a need for continued "norming" of expectations from one school and district to the next.

These trends suggest further support for evaluators and educators alike in year two.

1. Continued accountability guidelines

Differences in how the tool is used from parish to parish validate the continued need for stringent accountability guidelines, as with the current requirement that very low student progress results definitively lead to lower ratings. At the same time, variation in ratings between teachers receiving value-added data and those not receiving such data call for considering whether accountability guidelines should be expanded to cover all ratings.



2. Tools and enhancements, such as videos that may be used for training and norming on expectations

Educators are working to improve their understanding of the Compass rubric and have asked for additions to the Instructional Video Library. The Video Library provides examples of performance at all levels of the Compass rubric in many different types of classrooms, and can be used as the basis for training and norming on expectations. In October, the video library will include additional examples of rubric-aligned teaching practice, and will expand to include examples of effective feedback conversations.

3. Provide more support and feedback to school leaders through site visits and inter-district or inter-school collaboration; orient the school leader tool and classroom observation tools toward more frequent classroom visits for administrators

For 2013–2014, the Compass – Leader rubric will be updated to more clearly define the characteristics of effective classroom feedback for teachers. State Network Teams will focus on collaboration across schools and districts to foster consistent expectations for classroom performance.

The Department will also adjust technology to make the educator observation and feedback process more efficient and useful. Starting in September, the Compass Information System (CIS) will include teacher and leader observation screens that give evaluators note-taking and scoring options that provide flexibility and save data entry time. Based on educator feedback, enhancements throughout the year will make CIS a more flexible, efficient tool for storing and reviewing Compass data.

Most important, Louisiana's students are doing better in the classroom than ever before. The state's literacy and math proficiency is up. Graduation rates are at an all-time high. More students are achieving college-going ACT and Advanced Placement scores. Progress in the classroom happens because educators embrace change and make it their own. In this first year of Compass, more than anything, we owe our educators thanks for using the tool to better themselves on behalf of their students. That, after all, is why they come to work each and every day.

APPENDIX A—SUMMARY IMPLEMENTATION DATA

[Table 1—Compass scores, by district](#)

- [Teacher](#)
- [Leader](#)
- [Counselor](#)

[Table 2 – Compass scores, by school](#)

[Table 3 – District-level summary reports](#)

[Table 4 – School-level reports, by district](#)

APPENDIX B – RUBRIC COMPONENT DATA

[Table 1—Average score and distribution for each component](#)

APPENDIX C – VALUE-ADDED DATA

[Table 1 – State-level value-added distributions](#)

APPENDIX D – COMPASS FINAL REPORT METHODOLOGY

[Compass Final Report Methodology](#)